

# Linking organic waste and agriculture in a circular economy

## How to solve the organic waste problem? A networking and sharing forum for local authorities and stakeholders - SUMMARY

This summary document provides an overview of the 'Local Authority Organic Waste Management Knowledge Forum' held in Colombo Sri Lanka, 19 June 2024, that sought to showcase best practices of linking organic waste and agriculture, explore how this could be strengthened in the future and connect relevant stakeholders for future collaborations. The forum included 32 representatives from Moratuwa Urban Council (UC), Seethawaka North Pradeshiya Sabha (PS), Kotikawatta PS, Seethawaka PS, Kaduwela Municipal Council (KMC) and the Western Division Waste Management Authority (WMA).

### About the Research Partnership

The forum was hosted by KMC in collaboration with the project, 'Sustainable Organic Waste Value Chains'. The project is implemented through a partnership between the Institute for Sustainable Futures at the University of Technology Sydney (UTS-ISF), the International Water Management Institute (IWMI), Janathakshan (GTE) Ltd, and Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka (SUSL).

The research project is funded under the Knowledge and Linkages for an Inclusive Economy (KLIE) Grants Program of the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT).

See work from the research partnership to date: [Click here.](#)

### Forum Overview

The forum began with the lighting of a traditional oil lamp to pay homage to gods and great teachers. It's believed that new beginnings, wisdom and hope flow from the flames of the candle.

Participants were welcomed to the forum by the Commissioner of KMC and Janathakshan CEO. Five local authorities presented their organic waste management practices, successes and challenges. They then met in small groups to discuss missing connections between waste management and agriculture and changes needed to improve organic waste management. The two sections of the forum highlighted innovations such as using food waste for animal feed. Challenges such as a lack of skilled labour force, technological deficiencies, high waste management costs and a lack of vehicles were highlighted.



### Forum outcomes

The Forum took stock of what local authorities are already doing and helped identify the connections that need to be improved and the missing links between the organic waste from households and its use in agriculture.

The Forum created connections between local authorities to continue working towards the improvement of organic waste management in the Western Province in Sri Lanka.

### Networking – exchange and learning

Following presentations by each of the local authorities, forum participants were invited to consider the following questions:



What types of connections do Local Authorities (LAs) use to collect, manage, and distribute the organic waste? How were the connections established and maintained?



What are the missing links between organic waste management and linking to agriculture?



What types of connections and strategies need to be created to improve links between organic waste council output and use in agriculture?



Based on this forum, what **takeaway and action** would your LA take forward **for more learning** and keeping in touch with the LAs?

### Invitation for continuing engagement



Our research partnership welcomes continuing multi stakeholder engagement. To reach us please email: Keren Winterford ([keren.winterford@uts.edu.au](mailto:keren.winterford@uts.edu.au)) or M Esham ([esham@agri.sab.ac.lk](mailto:esham@agri.sab.ac.lk))